

Virgil W. Pickrell

My brother Clark Pickrell served in the early part of the program. They lived in tents.

There was no transportation to Lake Wapello. We had no auto so Clark (nickname Duck) took the first check "Mom" got, and \$25.00 bought a 1927 Chevy.

My brother Chet age 16 got a license to drive, Duck could not own a car while in the C.C.C. so it was in Chet's name. Also the C.C.C. boys could not keep a car at camp (regardless of owner).

The car would only hold six and myself, I was only twelve and had to ride on some one's lap. I always went in case of car trouble I could hitch hike home while Chet stayed with the car. I was only twelve, small children could hitch hike easier.

We would go out on Friday night with the boys. We could only haul five passengers. If a guy got a letter from home saying a close relative was ill he would ride with me on his lap so he could get home.

The guys riding would come back Sunday evening to our house to go back to camp.

Virgil Pickrell, I served a year in the CCC camp at Oskaloosa when I was eighteen. They told me I could go to school and learn a trade. I had learned to weld as a helper but couldn't pass the test. Oskaloosa had so many signed to learn that I couldn't get in the program to train for a trade so I stayed a year then came home.

In the summer we planted trees, and seeded ponds and terraces that the dozers built. We also built fences around the ponds.

We also worked in a rock quarry. They crushed lime rock for the farm fields. This during the winter.

I had to hitch hike to Ottumwa to get home on weekends. I would come home twice a month. They said we could learn a trade but the only thing we used was a long handle shovel. In winter a sledge hammer in a rock quarry breaking rocks.

Some of the boys who rode home with us would stay at our house. They came to town to drink and find girls some drank some found girls.

As they didn't have enough money to rent a room they would sleep at our house on the floor, if they were from a different town. We all ate pancakes for breakfast.